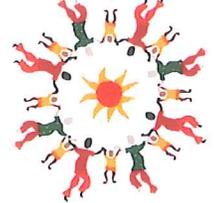




APPROVED: November 24, 2015

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION & HISPANIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
City Hall, Municipal Court Room
Tuesday, October 27, 2015
3:00 p.m.



MINUTES

Human Relations Commissioners present: Kim Whitley, Tina Dodge Vera, Graham Kislingbury, Javier Cervantes

Human Relations Commissioners absent: Chris Equinoa (excused), Denise Hughes-Tafen (excused), Jay Sluiter (unexcused)

Hispanic Advisory Committee members present: Tammy Skubinna, Heather Medina Saucedo, Iris Carrasco, Rocio Munoz, Javier Cervantes, Rosa Plascencia, Maria Lopez, Eugenia Sotelo, Dania Samudio, Tina Dodge Vera, Oralea Mendez, Yesenia Gutierrez, Shirley Blake, Ma Guadalupe Lipez, Alicia Lucke, Joyce Thompson Graham, Adriana Villegus, Miguel Mendez, Carolina Pina Paez

Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer; Katie Nooshazar, Recreation Programs Manager; Anj Brown, Resource Development Coordinator; Debbi Richards, Recreations Program Supervisor

Others present: None

CALL TO ORDER

Human Relations Commission (HRC) Chair Javier Cervantes called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Introductions

Cervantes welcomed the HAC and had everyone introduce themselves, starting with the Commission.

DISCUSSION WITH HISPANIC ADVISORY COUNCIL (HAC)

Sharing of respective missions and focus

Heather Medina said that the HAC's mission hasn't changed: to promote collaborative efforts to improve the quality and availability of resources and services for the Hispanic/Latino communities of Linn and Benton Counties. Tammy Skubinna said that the HAC is a means of networking, hosting forums, a place where people can hear about issues. Iris Carrasco added that they are moving into advocacy and are okay with advocating.

Cervantes shared that the HRC is an advisory committee to the City Council. They build bridges across communities, striving to make Albany a harmonious place to live; it is a work in progress. He explained that the mission is helped by meeting with partners in the community. Cervantes said that the Commissioners ask themselves how they can serve the community better and be made more aware of situations that occur in the community. He expressed that he was happy to see all the HAC members at the meeting and that it was good to be having conversations. Cervantes said that the Latino population is growing rapidly. Tina Dodge Vera explained that she and Cervantes share the highlights of the monthly HAC meeting with the HRC, keeping them up-to-date. Cervantes added that it is a standing agenda item for the Commission.

How can HRC and HAC support each other's missions?

Medina expressed her appreciation to the Commission and City staff for participating and volunteering in the Festival Latino. She explained that it promotes community among everyone in Albany and in Linn and Benton Counties.

Skubinna thanked the Commission for presenting the HR Award to their committee. Cervantes announced the opening of the application process for this year's award. Whitley recounted that the award was broadened last year to include for-profit organizations.

Cervantes described the communication from the HAC as very helpful, including both praise and issues. Cervantes encouraged the group to continue to keep lines of communication open with the knowledge that the HRC meetings are always open. He shared that City Manager Wes Hare was instrumental in helping with a recent housing issue regarding two Hispanic families. Hare shared that the families ended up in better living conditions and the previous landlord agreed to drop the fees they were charging the families. Hare gave credit to HAC member Leonor Rodriguez and City Planner III Anne Catlin for the good outcome. He said this situation was a good example of the working relationship between the Commission and City staff. Rosa Munoz said that she appreciates the advocacy work the Commission does. She questioned what the root cause of the issue was and challenged the group to address the concern on a larger scale.

Kim Whitley was glad that this issue was brought up and shared that she had a conversation with Kenny LaPoint of Oregon Housing and Community Services regarding the area's health and housing. Whitley said she had been asked if the Commission would be willing to sponsor a health and housing forum. Munoz said that the forum was already happening. Whitley explained that the one Munoz was referring to was most likely the forum on health and transportation. Kislingbury asked if there was a board of realtors that could be made aware of the housing issues happening in the community. Cervantes commented that the Tim Wise lecture was helpful in making City officials aware of community issues. He said there was a good turnout from public employees and commended the Police Chief and City Manager Wes Hare for attending. Hare relayed that the entire command staff of the Albany Police Department was there along with over a dozen other City employees. Cervantes said that his work is to get people to be aware. The lecture got some critical thought going and gave a strong footing for moving Albany forward.

Medina asked if the HRC worked with the Albany Area Chamber of Commerce. Cervantes answered that they did not formally. Hare explained that the Chamber is a nonprofit separate from the City. Medina related that the Chamber recently sent out their PowerBook that listed predominately white organizations. She found the term "power" used in the title very interesting. Resource Development Coordinator Anj Brown commented that members pay to be listed in the book. Skubinna shared that she had a negative, frustrating experience with the Chamber. The Chamber told the HAC they don't target their resources to specific groups, but the HAC had noticed that they host special events for women in business. When the HAC confronted the Chamber, they were told the women's group was a different case. Iris Carrasco said that she received one of the PowerBooks and it reinforced to her what the Chamber is promoting. She would like to see them make a concerted effort at inclusion. Medina said that the Chamber declined a request from the HAC for donations towards Festival Latino. Cervantes advised the group not to shut the door but to keep the conversations open. Hare noted that the members pay dues to the Chamber and it is run through a board of directors. The City is a member in the interest of supporting local businesses. Cervantes responded that the City is a high profile member. Hare replied that they aren't to the degree of other cities. He explained that the City stays away from political activity as much as they can. Graham Kislingbury expressed his appreciation of the Chamber's Distinguished Service awards. The public, not just Chamber members, can nominate participants.

Festival Latino

Munoz reported that the HAC will be meeting with the Parks & Recreation Department for follow up to the festival. The HAC plans to start work on next year's festival earlier, working on it ten months out of the year instead of only five. Cervantes invited the HRC to attend the meeting with the Parks & Recreation Department this Thursday at 3:30 p.m.

Munoz gave a brief history of the festival, explaining that it was started to bridge the cultural divide and to gather acknowledgement of the growing Latino population. Skubinna added that the Parks Department had been the lead and the HAC helped. She said that there is still a partnership. Recreation Programs Manager Katie Nooshazar commented that the Parks Department looked for involvement from the Latino community and gave the lead to them. Munoz explained

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that this year there were issues with communication between organizations and volunteers. They are trying to figure out how to meet each other's needs. She said that both organizations do what they do well.

Kislingbury said that the festival was a really nice event. He pointed out the story in the *Democrat Herald* regarding the story about CARDV's vigil. Kislingbury recommended that the HAC introduce compelling stories to the newspaper ahead of next year's event to attract greater attendance. He also recommended involving the Jefferson area.

Medina noted that it is a group of volunteers who put on the festival in their spare time. They are people with jobs and families, making it challenging to put on a festival. It has been her observation that other cities take the lead for this kind of event. She explained that the HAC doesn't put this event on to make money but to share community and learn from each other. A big part of the festival is the health area. Medina stressed the need for further engagement from the City. Cervantes suggested having more communication about how other cities lead and use their process as a template. He added, though, that he would hate to lose the community connection or to lose control where it ends up being some other sort of event. Munoz suggested looking back ten years to the great model of when the City was in the lead and build on that. She challenged that there is a need to serve the one out of five community members. Whitley asked Hare how the process works for City-sponsored events. Hare answered that each has its own story. The festival started with the HAC, died down, and then started back up by the Parks & Recreation Department. He explained how the Foster Grandparent Program and the River Rhythms' stories look different. They start with a purpose and target a market. Nooshazar explained how the Parks & Recreation Department took up the festival to acquaint the older community with the Spanish population, but it didn't grow. They deduced that one reason it wasn't reaching the Latino community was because it was being run by people outside of that community. That needed to change. Nooshazar said at Thursday's meeting they need to consider what they are trying to accomplish, what the appropriate roles are, and how can they communicate better.

Event for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day (Monday, January 18, 2016)

Cervantes noted that the HRC holds an event on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s (MLK) actual birthday, January 15, instead of on the Monday federal holiday. He invited the HAC to participate in the reading of one of MLK's speeches.

Strategic plan in regards to growing population in Albany

Not discussed.

Human Relations Award

Not discussed.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

HAC member Rosa Plascencia said that her friend Maria Lopez had a story to share with the group. Lopez related that her concern is that she feels that she does not belong to the city without picture identification. She described an incident where she was detained from boarding a plane for state-to-state travel even though she had checked beforehand and was told she could use her consulate ID. Lopez explained that she understands ID is necessary, but situations like these make her feel afraid and uncomfortable. She has experienced problems at her children's school, medical facilities, and at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Tina Dodge Vera asked if there wasn't some way the City could provide picture ID as in a library card or something. Cervantes commented that hundreds in the city face this same sort of scenario. Hare responded that the City could implement having a picture on the library cards, but it would not be accepted as an appropriate identification for travel or other important purposes. Whitley expressed that a picture ID gives access to a multitude of things, but without it, one can't even go camping or just validate who they are. Eugenia Sotelo pointed out that she knew of someone that couldn't even volunteer because they didn't have a picture ID. Lopez added that she could not donate blood. Munoz said that since Governor Kitzhaber recommended state troopers accept consulate cards and families already have those cards, couldn't it be worked out with area officials to accept those cards. Cervantes said that we need to see what we can do as a municipality with recognizing consulate cards and to renew conversations with the existing governor. Munoz commented that this is just a Band-Aid.

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ADJOURNMENT

Cervantes closed the meeting by saying that he would like to see the HAC and HRC meet together a couple times a year and to arrange one of the meetings before Festival Latino. Skubinna agreed and suggested a full two hours together, instead of one. There was general consensus.

Cervantes handed out a flyer for the Coffee with a Cop event (see agenda file). He said it's an opportunity to speak with officers and raise concerns or give them feedback.

Cervantes adjourned the meeting at 4:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Holly Roten
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Wes Hare
City Manager